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SUCCESS STORY

Nuer Peace Council Launches a Liaison Office in Juba



The council's staff prepares to move from a makeshift structure (inset) into their new office.

The Nuer Peace Council's advocacy measures aim to ensure that the policies of the Government of Southern Sudan are consistent with the people's aspirations for peace.

November 2007 – Until recently, the Nuer Peace Council's coordination efforts in Juba, like those of many local southern Sudanese institutions, were hampered by a lack of adequate office space and exorbitant rental costs. With support from USAID's Office of Transition Initiatives, however, the council now has its own office with a suitable working environment for its efforts to promote peace and reconciliation among southern Sudan's diverse tribes.

For decades, intertribal conflict has devastated many parts of southern Sudan. Pastoralists living in the greater Upper Nile State, in particular, were heavily armed and loosely organized under the leadership of chiefs or cattle camp leaders.

Following the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) between north and south Sudan in 2005, pastoralist resistance to disarmament measures led to violent clashes between the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) and local groups in the Lou Nuer territory. These clashes led to a USAID-sponsored initiative with the Nuer Peace Council to bring together politicians, armed groups, and Lou Nuer leaders for talks that ended with an agreement among the parties on disarmament and peaceful engagement with their neighbors.

The council has worked successfully through a network of peace committees to facilitate community-driven efforts to unify various militia groups and integrate them into the SPLA. Today, the council is also focusing on advocacy measures to ensure that the Government of Southern Sudan's policies are consistent with its main goal of promoting peace in the region. The council's liaison office improves coordination on peace building with key partners, including members of the Nuer Caucus in Parliament, donor agencies, and nongovernmental organizations.

Although most of the fighting during Sudan's north-south civil war pitted the southern Sudanese SPLA against the Government of Sudan, it has been the intertribal conflicts that have devastated many parts of southern Sudan. Support for the Nuer Peace Council is part of USAID's effort to address the destructive impact of intertribal violence and avoid setbacks to the achievements realized through the CPA.